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THE SECOND ANNUAL MEETING OF THE SOCIETY
FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCANDINAVIAN STUDY

The Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study met at Northwestern University on Friday and Saturday, April 26th and 27th, 1912. Programs had been sent to every member and to Scandinavian newspapers in Chicago, Minneapolis, Decorah and elsewhere. The sessions were held in the Northwestern University Building, corner Lake and Dearborn Streets, Chicago.

FIRST SESSION, FRIDAY, APRIL 26. 2:00 P. M.

The meeting was called to order by the President of the Society, who introduced President A. W. Harris of Northwestern University who welcomed the Society as the guest of the University and spoke briefly of the history of Scandinavian work at Northwestern University.

The Secretary of the Society presented the printed Proceedings of the Society as his report, being *Proceedings*, I, 1, printed in June, 1911, and I, 2, printed in February, 1912. It was moved and carried that the report be accepted.

The reading of papers was then begun.

1. Hagbard's Beard (*Kormáks saga*, chapter 3). By Dr. L. M. Hollander of the University of Wisconsin. (15 minutes). The paper was discussed by Professor C. N. Gould and the author.

2. Gotthonic Names. By Docent Gudmund Schütte of Copenhagen University, Denmark. Read by Professor D. K. Dodge of the University of Illinois. (20 minutes). The paper was discussed by Professors Jules Mauritzon, George T. Flom and A. Louis Elmquist.

(Printed herewith as part of Proceedings I, 3).

3. The Writings of Giraldus Cambrensis as a Source for the *Speculum Regale*. By Professor L. M. Larson of the University of Illinois. In the absence of the author the paper was read by the Secretary of the Society. (15 minutes). The paper was followed by discussion by Professors Flom and

Julius E. Olson. (This paper forms part of the Introduction to Professor Larson's translation of the *Speculum Regale* which will be issued by the Society).

4. A Report on "The Scandinavian Languages in the Secondary Schools" by Professor A. A. Stomberg of the University of Minnesota was presented by Professor Elmquist. (15 minutes).

The report elicited general discussion. Mr. Thor J. Benson, Chicago, then presented a resolution relative to the introduction of the Scandinavian languages in certain High Schools of Chicago. Upon motion, the President appointed Professors Elmquist and Dodge and Mr. Aksel G. S. Josephson a committee to consider and report on the resolution.

5. The Strindberg Controversy in the Summer of 1910. By Professor Jules Mauritzon of Augustana College, Rock Island. (20 minutes).

In lieu of the formal paper in English Professor Mauritzon presented a discussion in the Swedish language.

The President then appointed the following committees:

1. To audit the Treasurer's report, Professor Jules Mauritzon and Professor C. N. Gould.
2. To nominate officers, Professor A. L. Elmquist, Professor D. K. Dodge, and Dr. L. M. Hollander.

There were twenty-one present at the session.

At six o'clock, Friday, a banquet was held at the City Club, 315 Plymouth Court. At the conclusion of the dinner the President of the Society delivered an address on "The Work of Our Society During the Past Year".

At 8 o'clock the members of the Society and their guests were entertained at a smoker at the City Club. A program was held in co-operation with "Strindbergarne". Mr. A. G. S. Josephson of the John Crerar Library spoke on August Strindberg; the address is printed herewith, pp. 127-129. This was followed by the reading of Strindberg's "Prolog till Gustaf Vasa" by Mr. Jacob Bonggren and Strindberg's "Ensam", translated by Mr. Josephson, read by Mr. W. N. C. Carlton of the Newberry Library. Mr. Werner Melinder then recited Strindberg's "Lokes Smädelser" and other selections, the

program closing with the singing of Scandinavian folk-songs led by Professor Olson.

There were thirty present.

SECOND SESSION, SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 9:30 A. M.

Reading and discussion of papers resumed.

6. Olaf Liljekrans and Ibsen's Later Works. By Professor A. M. Sturtevant of the University of Kansas. (15 minutes).

The paper was discussed by Professors Olson and Mauritzon.

(This paper has been published in *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, XI (July, 1912), pp. 381-401).

7. The language of the *Tunsberg Bylog*: a Contribution to the Study of East Norwegian in the 14th Century. By Professor George T. Flom of the University of Illinois. (15 minutes).

In the discussion that followed the author added material illustrative of the bearing of the subject on the origins of modern Norwegian *Riksmål*.

The Report of the Committee on Translations was then presented by the chairman, Professor C. N. Gould of the University of Chicago. The report dealt with the selection of translations suitable for translation from manuscripts submitted. It was moved and carried that the report be accepted, the Committee to be continued for complete report at the next annual meeting. It was moved and carried that the Committee consider separately the question of translations of the sagas and Old Norse literature and report thereon at a meeting of the Executive Board to be called by the President of the Society. It was the sentiment of those present that the saga series be started as soon as suitable translations of the selected sagas are in the hands of the Committee.

The Committee appointed to report on the resolution regarding Scandinavian languages in Chicago High Schools then offered the following resolution.

WHEREAS, This society was organized with the object, among others, of assisting the movement for the introduction of the study of Scandinavian languages and literatures in schools and colleges, and

of assisting in the procuring of competent teachers in this field, and

WHEREAS, The movement for the introduction of this study into the Chicago high schools was initiated by members of this Society, and

WHEREAS, The subject was presented by Charles O. Sethness, assisted by a large number of representative citizens, before President J. B. McFatrach on Jan. 12, and before Superintendent Ella Flagg Young four days later, and

WHEREAS, They agreed to recommend the matter favorably to the school management committee, and this body on the 11th inst. reported the matter favorably to the full board, where it is now pending, therefore be it

Resolved; That the Society for the Advancement of Scandinavian Study most heartily commend the action of Charles O. Sethness, as well as the position taken by President McFatrach and Superintendent Young and the school management committee in this matter, earnestly hoping and confidently believing that the board will accept their recommendation.

April 26, 1912.

The Treasurer's report was then read and adopted.

It was moved by Professor Flom that a committee of four be appointed by the President to report at the next annual meeting regarding the teaching of the Scandinavian languages in the secondary schools, the report to include the following: 1, to prepare a list of books used and texts now available in annotated editions; 2, to prepare a list of texts which, in the opinion of the committee, ought to be edited now for classroom use. 3, to prepare a list of the High Schools where a Scandinavian language has been introduced, names and academic career of the teachers, list of subjects taught, time given to the subject. 4, what training in the opinion of the committee, should be required of the teacher of a Scandinavian language in the secondary schools? The motion was carried and the following committee was appointed:

Committee on Secondary Schools: Professor A. A. Stomberg, University of Minnesota, chairman; Professor Knut Gjerset, Luther College, Iowa; Professor A. L. Elmquist, Northwestern University, Illinois; Dr. L. M. Hollander, University of Wisconsin.

By the vote of the Society according to Article 10, the office of Editor was established, Article 3 being thereby amended to include this office and the Executive Council to be in-

creased to ten. Article 4 was amended to include the words: the duties of the Editor shall be to edit the Proceedings and Studies of the Society.

The committee on the nomination of officers then reported through its chairman as follows:

For President, Prof. Julius E. Olson.

For Vice-President, Prof. Jules Mauritzon.

For Secretary-Treasurer, Prof. C. N. Gould.

For Editor, Prof. George T. Flom.

The nominees were then duly elected. As members of the Advisory Committee for three years were elected Professors Laurence M. Larsen of the University of Illinois and Professor A. M. Sturtevant, Kansas University.

Adjournment.

AUGUST STRINDBERG

[Address delivered by Mr. A. G. S. Josephson at the smoker April 26.]

Those who still remember the fury with which August Strindberg's first writings were received in Sweden must view with surprise the change which in later years has come over public opinion in this respect, as evidenced in the admiration that was so generally expressed during the celebration of his 64th birthday, last January. True, there were some who still had the trumpet-calls of 1910 in their ears, and others who could not forget *Svarta fanor*. Verner von Heidenstam would likely not now write the poem with which he greeted Strindberg on his fiftieth anniversary in 1899, and which someone was inconsiderate enough to reprint this year. Strindberg stands today recognised, both in Sweden and abroad, as one of the greatest dramatists of modern times and the foremost name in Swedish literature of today.

There seem to be three traits that stand out in Strindberg's authorship: his technical skill, his power of characterization and his faculty for suffering. The last is with him quite as remarkable as the other two, and as much a part of his literary power. It is hardly conceivable that a man could go through the adversities that have been Strindberg's lot from his early childhood without having received scars for life, nor did Strindberg go through it unscarred. Strindberg overcame his sufferings by making use of them as objects for artistic presentation. He used his own life experiences as subjects for literary expression in a larger degree perhaps than anyone else; and he strove to be absolutely truthful in his authorship. Much of his suffering was imaginary; it was not on that account any the less

real to him. And he has evidently presented his experiences exactly as he saw them. Not that he didn't use his imagination; his imagination was drawn upon more in the arrangement of the material than in the material itself.

Among Swedish writers Strindberg's name is significant in a two-fold way: 1), as the inaugurator of a new period in Swedish literature and 2), as having enriched the Swedish literary language with many significant words and phrases, taken in many cases from the language of the street and stamped by the mark of his genius. Strindberg says somewhere that in the seventies Swedish literature was "Ibsen, Björnson and Jonas Lie". This was literally true if by a country's literature we mean the authors who exercise an influence on the life and thought of the people. In the seventies, Victor Rydberg was not much concerned with literature proper. Snoilsky was only occasionally heard from, and then not by works that could attract wide attention. As for the rest, there were writers of both verse and prose, but they could hardly be said to constitute a definite national literature. With Strindberg's *Röda rummet* and *Mäster Olof* a truly national Swedish literature makes its appearance; or rather these works represent a revival of the literature that had lain dormant since the days of Tegnér.

Strindberg did not create a school; he was a forerunner and had, as a matter of fact, little to do with the men who represented the radical literary movement of the eighties. He was not at that time a radical, for one thing, and he always preferred to travel his own way. But he opened the breach in the low ebb of Swedish letters, and made a way where the others could follow. He always stood alone, and was always true to himself. He was indeed not always consistent, and his evolution has not always been in the line of progress. In respect of religious views we find him to be a pietist as a youth. In his young manhood he is an unorthodox theist; then he becomes an atheist, and in his later years turns squarely around to a mystical, if not to say a superstitious, view of the universe. At the time of his death his standpoint was that of an ethical religion, based on a literal belief in the words of the Bible. In his social views Strindberg shows the same disinclination to remain long the adherent of any school of thought. From the beginning a radical, in the middle of the '80's he became converted to socialism, but after a few years left that faith for a Nietzschean individualism. Then for a time he seemed more or less indifferent to anything that could not be interpreted in the terms of mystical ethicism. In the last years of his life he again, it seems, embraced socialism, at least he showed great interest in the labor movements, both political and economic.

As an artist, on the other hand, Strindberg has steadfastly moved forward to greater simplicity of expression, firmer grasp of his subject and a clearer vision of truth. There have been some strange lapses: some of the short stories from the last two decades, and a number of

the sketches in *En blå Bok*. But his dramatic production has shown a steady progress toward clearness and simplicity.

Strindberg's influence on Swedish literature has been vast. While not the leader of any school, he showed the younger men the way, as also when he broke with the naturalistic tendency at a time when men like Heidenstam, Levertin and Fröding inaugurated the new "romantic" movement. He was, as I have said, always himself, always expressed his own innermost thought, no matter how strange they might seem. And herein I think, lies his message, a message, it is true, not very different from the message of all great artists: be true to thyself.